

Medicare eligible beneficiaries directly from the drug manufacturers at the same prices that they are currently selling to the government, to the big HMOs, and to the hospital chains.

□ 1645

We think that is only fair, that is only right. Our senior citizens deserve to be treated better. I am proud to join with the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. BERRY) and the gentleman from Maine (Mr. ALLEN) and the others here today in trying to enact this into law.

Mr. BERRY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Texas for his leadership in this matter.

Mr. Speaker, I now yield to the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Ms. DELAURO).

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague, the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. BERRY), and I want to say I offer my congratulations to him and to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. TURNER) and the gentleman from Maine (Mr. ALLEN) for introducing this legislation. It really is so critical to what seniors in this country are facing today.

To bring this to the Nation's attention, I think we can really create no better opportunity than to provide some relief to people who we have all heard from, all of us. There are 435 Members of this body; 435 Members have heard that their seniors that they represent are in a difficult spot. Many are just deciding, as has been said on this floor today, between whether or not they are going to have a decent meal or whether or not in fact they are going to be able to take care of their health concerns.

Let me just talk a little bit about my own district, which is the 3rd District of Connecticut. I conducted a study and discovered that seniors in Connecticut's 3rd District pay an average of twice what the pharmaceutical companies' preferred customers pay. And by "preferred customers," so it is clear, and I am sure others have made that clear here today, these are large corporate institutional customers with market power for which they can buy drugs at a discount price. And that is a good thing. That is a good thing.

While HMOs and others get the drugs at a discount, the cost is shifted to seniors and others who shop at their local store or their pharmacy. The bottom line is that we have seniors winding up subsidizing the corporate discounts out of their own pockets, and they live on fixed incomes. It is very difficult for them to make ends meet and to be able to afford prescription drugs.

I will give my colleagues an example. Prilosec, a drug commonly prescribed to seniors, HMOs are able to buy an average dosage for \$56.38. Seniors in my district would pay \$108.63, almost double. It really is no wonder that some of the seniors that I have talked to spend

nearly half of their income each month just on prescription drugs.

On a personal note and a sad note for our family, my father-in-law, Sam Greenberg, passed away about two weeks ago. And something I did not realize when I talked with my mother-in-law is that they were paying up to \$800 a month for prescription drugs. I do not know how they did it. I do not know how they did it. And I did not know that. My husband did not know that. But they were trying the best they could to pay \$800 a month for prescription drugs.

When I released the study that I did last year, I met with the local pharmacists and I met with seniors in my district who were affected by the problem, and I met the daughter of a woman who had a stroke because she could not afford to take her medications but she was embarrassed to tell anyone about the problem. I met a pharmacist who does all that he can to help his customers afford the prescriptions that they need, sometimes giving them credit until they find money to pay him. I saw people who are struggling to make ends meet on a limited income while buying the medicine they need to stay healthy.

One of those seniors, Irma Yoxall, is a 72-year-old resident of West Haven, Connecticut. Ms. Yoxall suffers from diabetes and high blood pressure and she takes six prescription drugs. Her monthly income is \$750. She spends between \$300 and \$400 a month, almost half of her income, on her prescription drugs.

Until she became eligible for Medicaid, Ms. Yoxall had no insurance coverage at all for her prescription drug needs and at times was forced to skip medications because of the high cost. In fact, she recently suffered a stroke which her daughter believes was brought on because of the skipped medications.

Let me just say, and let me conclude, I want to say thank you to my colleagues. This is such an important piece of legislation. It simply says, let seniors purchase their medications at the same cost that our large corporations, HMOs, can make that purchase, and keep them healthy and keep them in a sense of security that in fact they can weather, weather the storm of a serious illness.

I thank my colleague again for letting me participate with all of my colleagues tonight.

Mr. BERRY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Ms. DELAURO) not only for her support in this matter but for her great leadership in the House.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Maine.

Mr. ALLEN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding, and I thank the gentlewoman from Connecticut for her support. It means a lot to us to

have her come down and be with us in this debate.

I just wanted to say, in closing, one thing. I said earlier that what is happening out there is that the pharmaceutical companies are charging their highest prices to those least able to pay. And by those least able to pay, I mean those Medicare beneficiaries, those seniors who do not qualify for Medicaid but are not wealthy enough to buy and use prescription drug insurance coverage. So they are left on their own, paying out of their own pocket.

The industry is going to say that this bill involves price controls, and my final point is that that is flat out wrong. This bill will allow the Federal Government to act as a negotiating agent to make sure that it gets the best prices for our seniors across the country. It does not involve price controls. It simply puts a big negotiator, a big buyer, into a market where right now seniors or, more accurately, those wholesalers who sell to retail pharmacies really do not control market share and really do not buy in the kind of bulk that is necessary to get big discounts.

H.R. 664, the Prescription Drug Fairness For Seniors Act, is the right bill at the right time at a low cost, a bill that would be effective in lowering the prices for seniors all across this country.

I just want to say in conclusion how much I appreciate the work of the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. BERRY) on this issue, the work of the gentleman from Texas (Mr. TURNER) on this issue. We are going to make a difference in this Congress and pass this legislation.

Mr. BERRY. Mr. Speaker, I will just conclude by mentioning what a heroic effort our local pharmacies have made in the last few years to try to take care of our seniors and see that they got the medicine they needed at the best possible prices, and the heroic effort that our seniors have made to deal with this very difficult situation.

The drug companies will say, "We need this much profit." What we are saying is, we want them to make a profit but they should not make it all off of our senior citizens. We must level the playing field. We must treat our seniors the way that other preferred customers get treated. And this is the right thing to do. It is the fair thing to do.

I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support H.R. 664.

TRIBUTE TO THE PEOPLE OF GUAM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 1999, the gentleman from Guam (Mr. UNDERWOOD) is recognized for 15 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. UNDERWOOD. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing legislation, as I

have for each of my four terms here, regarding an issue that is very special to the people of Guam, and that is an issue that goes back to the World War II experience of the people of Guam.

I am often asked what I enjoy most about my service as the elected representative of the people of Guam to the U.S. Congress, and my reply is that I appreciate being able to educate and tell Guam's story to as many people as possible.

Since I have been here, the most compelling story the people of Guam have to offer is their wartime experience. It is a story which begins during a time when the people of Guam were not yet U.S. citizens but were in a sense Americans-in-waiting. The story is filled with horror and heroism, suffering and relief, anticipation and disappointment, captivity and freedom, life and death. These are all the ingredients to a blockbuster movie, including Guam's happy ending of liberation from her captors by primarily U.S. Marines of the Third Division.

Yet as time passes and the story of Guam's occupation is passed from generation to generation on Guam, this is often where the story ends. But like any great Hollywood movie, there is always more to the story that can be told but sometimes simply is not. In many cases the producers are constrained by budget, time, and attention spans of their audiences, and Guam's World War II experience is no different.

It has now been 54 years since the liberation of Guam and, if anything, time has not meant that all is forgotten or forgiven, not until there is some measure of national recognition of what happened to our fellow Americans on Guam and how the Federal Government failed to make them whole and right the wrongs which resulted from the Japanese occupation.

There was a woman by the name of Mrs. Beatrice Flores Emsley, who was the most compelling advocate of this cause, who came and testified several times in front of congressional committees until her death two years ago. At the age of 13 she survived an attempted beheading by Japanese officers.

In the capital city of Agaña, she, along with another group of Chamorro people, were rounded up for beheading and mutilation and execution by swords. After being struck in the neck, she fainted, only to awake two days later with maggots all over her neck but thankful to be alive.

She would be haunted by her wartime experience for the rest of her life. And the long scar trailing her neckline, caused by the Japanese sword, was her constant reminder. Yet Mrs. Emsley never had words of bitterness, only that the people of Guam be made whole.

These stories are not meant to simply draw emotional attention to a very

difficult time, but the people of Guam suffered enormously as the only American territory which was occupied by an enemy power since the war of 1812, in which hundreds of people died, thousands of people were injured, and thousands of people were subjected to forced marches, forced labor, and internment by the invading Japanese Army.

There have been many opportunities by America to recognize Guam's dramatic experience of World War II. In 1945 Congress passed the Guam Meritorious Claims Act, which is known as Public Law 79-224. This was the legislation which was meant to grant immediate relief to the residents of Guam by the prompt settlement of meritorious claims. That legislation had no forced labor, no forced march provision to it, even though later legislation which covered the same topic for other groups of Americans did allow for it.

While the Guam Meritorious Claims Act became the primary means of settling war claims for the people of Guam, it was clearly inadequate. It was recognized by a number of Federal commissions, including the Hopkins Commission, Secretary of Interior Harold Ickes in 1947 and 1948, that the Guam Meritorious Claims Act, which was in existence for one year, was inadequate to deal with the thousands of claims that had to be submitted and in fact were not submitted.

It was inadequate to deal with the claims of a people who had simply lost all their homes and, instead of concentrating on the claims, they were all trying to find ways to be resettled. As a consequence, thousands of people, the vast majority of people of Guam never submitted claims. And most of the claims that were submitted and adjudicated by the United States Navy, which was the administering authority by congressional action for these claims, basically most of them were property claims.

To give my colleagues an example, one person who was beaten to death for saving a Navy pilot was given by the U.S. Navy, his family was given \$665.10 for the sacrifice of their father. A Navy plane had been shot down. He tried to go and help the pilot. The Japanese discovered him. He was subsequently beaten to death. The pilot was also executed. And for this the family received compensation, \$665.10.

□ 1700

If you wanted to personally, if you wanted to adjudicate a claim in 1946 dollars of more than \$5,000, which was allowed for a death claim, you had to come to Washington, D.C. to personally adjudicate the claim, which was quite an impossibility for a community that was war-torn at the time and did not really recover from World War II until the 1950s.

In asking on Congress to revisit this issue I want to point out a couple of items:

In 1945 there was the Guam Meritorious Claims Act. This was the act designed to deal with the American nationals of Guam for their suffering during World War II.

In 1948 there was similar legislation for Americans and American nationals, that was the term used at the time, to adjudicate their claims as a result of their suffering at the hands of the Japanese and the Germans. This includes people like who were nurses, for example, or American civilians who happened to be caught in the Philippines when the Japanese came. These people, including some people from Guam who happened to be in the Philippines at the time of the Japanese occupation, were allowed to submit claims under the 1948 law, and as a result of the inefficiencies in that law, that later was amended in 1962 to further perfect and finalize the arrangements dealing with the wartime experience.

The people of Guam were not included in the 1948 law, and they were not included in the 1962 law, and I want to explain a brief personal example of how that worked.

My grandfather, James Holland Underwood, was from North Carolina and he was a civilian on Guam when the Japanese landed. He was taken by the Japanese as a civilian internee, put in Japan for four years. While he was in Japan for four years, his wife, my grandmother, his sons, including my father, and their families were subjected to the Japanese occupation under very horrendous conditions. My parents lost three children during the Japanese occupation.

My grandfather was allowed to file a claim with the 1948 law, later revised in 1962, but neither of my parents were ever compensated for any of the experiences that they had, despite the fact that they were the ones who suffered the most. Not to say that my grandfather did not suffer as well, but it was an anomaly of congressional law.

The first question that I am always asked on something like this is why do we not submit these claims to the Japanese Government, since they were the source of this problem to begin with? And the issue is rather simple. The U.S.-Japan peace treaty in 1951 forever closed the door. That is typically part of peace treaties, whereby if you sign a peace treaty with a country, that claims of your own citizens against the other country are inherited by your own government. This was acknowledged by Secretary of State John Foster Dulles when the issue was raised in the 1950s.

So what we have is a case of legislation that has fallen through the cracks, has taken the one single group of Americans in this century who directly experienced foreign occupation and has ignored their sacrifices and has not respected their loyalty.

Yet despite this experience, July 21, which is the day that the Marines landed on Guam, is by far the biggest holiday on Guam. People are eternally and genuinely grateful for the sacrifices of the men of the Third Marine Division, First Marine Provisional Brigade, units of the 77th U.S. Army infantry, the Coast Guard, the Navy, very genuinely grateful for the sacrifices in removing the Japanese from Guam.

Yet the people of Guam have not been treated the same as the people of the Philippines, who were granted \$390 million by the U.S. Congress and who in turn, because they became an independent Nation, were allowed to submit separate claims against Japan. The people of Guam were not treated the same as other U.S. nationals and other American citizens and most noticeably sometimes different people, because they were in the same family, were treated differently.

This is an issue which will take some resolution. I am glad to see that there have been several cosponsors for this legislation. I have introduced this legislation today. I hope and I pray that this will be the Congress that will finally put this issue to rest. World War II, the sacrifices of the World War II generation, are no less the men in uniform and the people back on the domestic home front, but certainly for a very small group of people who were considered American nationals at the time, who endured a horrendous occupation by an enemy power, subject to forced marches, forced labor, brutal killings, many injuries and widespread malnutrition which itself caused hundreds of deaths, must not go unnoticed, must not go unrecognized.

And so I hope and I pray that this will be the Congress where we will finally bring an end to this wartime legacy.

Mrs. Beatrice Flores died two years ago. Under this legislation, if she had remained alive, she would be awarded \$7,000 for injuries suffered as a result of World War II. Today, even if this legislation passes, nothing would happen. Her family would get nothing because the only legitimate claims that can be made were for those people who actually died during the Japanese occupation.

So, the longer we wait, the more justice is delayed, the more certain people who experience this directly will not get compensated, and so I feel very strongly about this. I feel that the people of Guam finally need for this to come to a conclusion, and I hope that Members of this body will support this piece of legislation.

GOOD FRIDAY AGREEMENT IN PERIL

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GREEN of Wisconsin). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6,

1999, the gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Speaker, I would like to acknowledge at this time my good friend and colleague from Massachusetts (Mr. NEAL) who will join me and other Members, including the gentleman from New York (Mr. BEN GILMAN) in a bipartisan discussion concerning the Northern Ireland peace agreement.

Mr. Speaker, the peace process in Northern Ireland is in serious trouble. The Good Friday agreement we cautiously celebrated last spring is now under attack from within. Ulster Party leader David Trimble, who signed the agreement just nine months ago, is now balking and trying to reopen, renegotiate and re-interpret the terms of that hard-fought agreement. Over the past few months we have seen deadlines pass, deals reneged upon and a return to the ugly politics of exclusion.

Let me remind those who support the status quo that the people in Ireland, north and south, voted decisively for change in the referendums last May. History will not be kind to those who fail to deliver.

The next couple of weeks are critical. On Monday the Northern Ireland Assembly will meet to formally approve the creation of the 10-member executive and cross-border bodies. Over the next two weeks the assembly will make preparations for the transfer of powers from the Northern Ireland office on March 10.

David Trimble wishes to lay claim to the title of first Minister of Northern Ireland. If he is ever to fulfill the tremendous responsibilities of serving as the first minister for both communities in Northern Ireland, he needs to move forward to implement the agreement that he is a party to and to appoint ministers to the executive. If he fails to do so, the two governments party to the agreement, namely Ireland, the Republic of Ireland, and Great Britain should reject the Trimble veto, take responsibility into their own hands and implement the agreement. They must support those who are working for peace, who wish to govern and serve in a new Northern Ireland. They should implement the agreement.

Mr. Speaker, why should the people of the United States care? Well, because first of all there are millions and millions of Americans of Irish descent who reside in the United States, some of whom have paid very close attention to this, others who have not but yet understand what all Americans understand, and that is that Northern Ireland must move forward into a pluralistic, democratically-elected government that makes it possible for everyone to live out their lives, and practice their religion, and practice their own philosophy, and raise their family and

raise their children in a spirit of equality and under a government that allows for individual freedoms and beliefs.

One of the issues that has really hung this process up is something referred to as decommissioning. Decommissioning is the term that is used by the political parties of the north that in effect would disarm all of the combatants in this process, and I stress the words all of the combatants. As you probably know, there has been for the last 30 years at least a period of strife, civil strife, violence, and it has been a very difficult time. Decommissioning would require under the agreement that all parties to the agreement, all political parties to the agreement, would use their good offices and their political capital to remove all of the guns and all the bullets from Northern Ireland. The agreement provided two years for this to take place and urged that all parties work toward that end, and at the end of the two-year period ideally all the weapons would be removed.

Mr. Trimble has seized upon this issue and has, I think, really backed himself into a corner, because what he is saying now is that in order for him to implement the agreement, the IRA and the political leadership of Sinn Fein must deliver decommissioning prior to the implementation of the government, which is in direct contradiction to the agreement. The agreement says we all work together toward the end of violence and decommissioning, the end of arms, in a two-year period.

Meanwhile we have deadlines that have to be met in order to put this government together, and if Mr. Trimble would stick to the agreement, progress would be being made now, and in fact one of the things that has to occur along the way is to eliminate the root causes for violence. And if those root causes are not eliminated, then regardless of whether the weapons disappear now or later, if the root causes are still there, the violence will return.

So the agreement was hard-fought, every "I" was dotted and "T" was crossed with everyone watching, and words do matter over there. So the agreement needs to be implemented.

I will take another moment and focus on another very important element in this agreement, and then I will yield to my friend from Massachusetts (Mr. NEAL).

The Good Friday agreement calls for a new beginning to policing in Northern Ireland and contains a clear and unmistakable mandate for a new approach in this area, one capable of attracting and maintaining support from the community as a whole. In doing so it acknowledges the major defects in the current policing arrangement and the vital need for change.